

WARRIOR CARE MONTH



November 2008



OBJECTIVE

“Warrior Care Month” will be a month-long DoD-wide coordinated tactical effort to educate the military and to increase awareness of DoD’s Warrior Care programs and resources. Warrior Care Month will provide a snapshot of the Continuum of Care in a 30-day period.

Warrior Care Month will focus on the programs, initiatives, and support that DoD promises our military through the phases of recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration that are integral to the livelihood of our wounded, ill and injured servicemembers, and their families.

The universal message of “WARRIOR CARE” as presented by the Warrior Care Long-Term Communications Plan will be utilized to ensure the message is inclusive of all DoD programs, joint efforts between agencies, and localized support of Wounded Warriors.

A telephone and web-based survey will be conducted at the beginning and at the end of November to gauge any increase/decrease in awareness of Warrior Care programs.



AUDIENCE

The audience for Warrior Care Month is two-fold. The first priority of Warrior Care Month is to reach out and inform our military, military families, and veterans about the many programs and resources within DoD and the Department of Veterans Affairs (as appropriate) that are available through the Services as well as at the DoD/VA level.

The second audience of Warrior Care Month is the public to increase awareness of Warrior Care issues and programs as outlined by the Senior Oversight Committee's Line of Action 7: Warrior Care Long-Term Communication Plan.

Warrior Care Month will reassure our servicemembers and their families that DoD is committed to care, promises to evaluate ongoing programs and fix problems, and recognizes that it is our duty to "connect the dots" to assist those in need.



OVERVIEW

OSD PA will initiate and form a DoD-wide Steering Committee to execute Warrior Care Month.

The Warrior Care Month Steering Committee will be comprised of DoD Components to include representatives from each of the Service divisions (representing also Reserve Components and National Guard Bureau), America Supports You, Entertainment Media, General Counsel, the Joint Staff, Health Affairs, Legislative Affairs, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Together, the Warrior Care Month Steering Committee will assign each Component an area of responsibility to execute.

All events, reports, and press generated through Warrior Care Month will be highlighted on a dedicated DoD website: www.warriorcare.mil, which will provide information to the audiences about America's Wounded Warriors on a range of subject matter from programs to stories to news.

The month-long effort will follow the three phases of the continuum of care, with the early part of November focusing on recovery (acute care), the middle of the month focusing on rehabilitation (long-term care), and the latter part of the month focusing on reintegration (community involvement in the care of Wounded Warriors).

With the two national holidays of Veterans Day and Thanksgiving in November falling in the middle and at the end of the month, the transition between the phases will be seamless (Veterans Day: What we do and what we are working on. Thanksgiving: How to help.).



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

By utilizing DoD programmatic elements throughout the different phases as well as mixing and matching the different tactics to transfer from one phase to another, a comprehensive integrated strategy has been devised to reach the widest possible audience.

Throughout the month, the Warrior Care Month Steering Committee's responsibility will be to streamline and funnel communications throughout DoD to reach the different segments of our military.

Warrior Care Month will provide both an overview of the Military Health System and the resources within the system, as well as targeting areas that further coordination efforts need to recognize and resolve.

Each of the different tactics of Warrior Care Month will highlight DoD programs and the on-going initiatives to improve care, enabling DoD to convey the highly complex system and the three phases of care in one succinct message. This approach to encapsulate the system ensures a higher success rate of explaining the different stages of care provided at the different levels of care.

To reach the selected audiences (internal and external), a Recovery, Rehabilitation, Reintegration matrix has been developed to implement Warrior Care Month. An overarching "Continuum of Care" matrix will encompass the entire month and support each phased matrix.

RECOVERY

Focus: Acute Care and Technology & Facilities

Goal: To highlight the different ways in which DoD is reacting to and developing new methods to save lives on the battlefield, as well as provide substantive care from point of injury to increase recovery rates.

Internal

- Issue Warrior Care Cards to all servicemembers with one-stop Warrior Care resource for reference (examples include stamping information on all new dog tags or sending an email with a vCard from SECDEF).
- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and ensure that information is conveyed to military through new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts, and is provided via online streaming to bases around the world.
- Utilize administrative DoD channels to increase awareness of Recovery Message to servicemembers and their families via DFAS, DoD Publications, MWR facilities, AAFES, Commissaries.
- Produce a PSA with a focus on Combat Medicine and New Technologies for distribution to all Command Access Channels, while also making it available on all DoD websites for Components to download to reassure military of DoD's capabilities.
- Following in the "Why We Serve" model, create a Warrior Care Month military medical experts speakers bureau to participate in on-base roundtables, lectures, and events. Focus on evacuation teams and combat medics. The corresponding PSA will be available online as well as a repository of other relevant footage for bases to mix and match event elements.

External

- JCOC (Joint Civilian Orientation Conference) – Landstuhl. Focus on acute care and medical technologies provided to Wounded Warriors to demonstrate lower causality rates.
- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and engage new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts.
- Organize Conference Calls with Military Service Organizations to discuss the different levels of acute care within the Military Health System, new facilities being developed to meet new demands, and the use of technology to lower the transition time to the Rehabilitation phase.
- Lead CODELs to acute care centers to highlight the new and innovative therapies in place which shorten the time of the recovery stage into the rehabilitation stage.
- Following in the "Why We Serve" model, create a Warrior Care Month military medical experts speakers bureau to participate in Townhall meetings, community conferences, and other events as appropriate. Focus on evacuation teams and combat medics. A video repository will be made available for groups to view in advance of event.
- Focus weekly "Heroes" program on the acute care and leading authorities of the Recovery phase of Warrior Care, including print, online, and radio outreach elements.

REHABILITATION

Focus: Service-specific Care programs, Injury-specific Initiatives, Holistic/Alternative Therapies, Family Support & Caregiver Education.

Goal: To demonstrate the different methods used to provide care for different types of injuries, the different resources available, and where DoD is looking to exceed expectations and streamline processes.

Internal

- Utilize administrative DoD channels to increase awareness of Rehabilitation Message of "Did You Know X & Y About the Military Health System." Education campaign will inform servicemembers and their families on how to find resources. Channels include DFAS, DoD Publications, MWR facilities, AAFES, Commissaries.
- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and ensure that information is conveyed to military through new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts, and is provided via online streaming to bases around the world.
- Produce a PSA to focus on Wounded Warriors who are in the Rehabilitation phase of care (Warriors speaking for themselves and offering advice) for distribution to all Command Access Channels, while also making it available on all DoD websites for Components to download.
- Assist Wounded Warriors in attending their local Veterans Day activities (such as parades), accompanied by a GO/FO, as appropriate.
- Why We Serve medical experts to focus on caregivers, nurses, surgeons, physical therapists, and military hospital staff. Corresponding PSA will be available online as well as a repository of other relevant footage for bases to mix and match event elements.

External

- JCOC – Balboa Naval Medical Center. Highlight the rehabilitation programs of Warrior Care, with emphasis on injury-specific programs, new technologies, facilities, and therapies.
- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and engage new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts.
- Organize Conference Calls with Military Service Organizations to discuss the different levels of rehabilitation, focusing on injury-specific programs such as PTSD and TBI.
- Lead CODELs with a focus on efforts to improve systems at military hospitals around the country.
- Assist Wounded Warriors in attending their local Veterans Day activities (such as parades), accompanied by a GO/FO as appropriate.
- Focus weekly Heroes program on the Wounded Warriors currently undergoing the Rehabilitation stage of Warrior Care to tell their own personal story. Outreach will be to print, online, and radio outlets.

REINTEGRATION

Focus: Transition to civilian life and community involvement.

Goal: To highlight how DoD is “setting the example” in Warrior Care transition.

Internal

- Utilize administrative DoD channels to educate to servicemembers and their families on how the Services will help to make the transition back to civilian life. Channels include DFAS, DoD Publications, MWR facilities, AAFES, Commissaries.
- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and ensure that information is conveyed to military through new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts, and is provided via online streaming to bases around the world.
- Produce a PSA with a community-based focus (“famous faces”) about help that is being offered by the community for Wounded Warriors to assist in the transition to civilian life. Distribute to all Command Access Channels, while also making it available on all DoD websites for Components to download.
- Why We Serve experts to focus on job training programs, community resources, and VA transition. Corresponding PSA will be available online as well as a repository of other relevant footage for bases to mix and match event elements.
- Publish a Wounded Warrior Wishes list to send through the Combatant Commands to “set the example” in assisting our Wounded Warriors over the Thanksgiving holiday. The message of the Wishes (an opt-in wish based list) will be virally distributed through a Wounded Warrior-themed song made available to servicemembers through AAFES, and a possible tour by the musician.

External

- Host Leadership Roundtable with Constituent Organizations and engage new media elements such as blogs, DoD vClips, Podcasts.
- Organize Conference Calls with Military Service Organizations to discuss the different types of community support that is integral to the Reintegration process.
- Spotlight Service-affiliated and homefront organizations focused on Wounded Warriors care and support to highlight ways in which the community assists in the reintegration phase of care. November is also Military Family Month, so many events will be focused on military families, the care they receive, and best practices.
- Focus weekly Heroes program on the Wounded Warriors currently undergoing the Rehabilitation stage of Warrior Care to tell their own personal story. Outreach will print, online, and radio outlets.
- Produce a PSA with a community-based focus (“famous faces” alongside Wounded Warriors) about help that is being offered by the community for Wounded Warriors and their families to air on military-specific television programs such as *Army Wives*.

CONTINUUM OF CARE

Focus: Overarching Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration care programs.

Goal: Using resources already in place, continue the flow of information to highlight where necessary a specific phase to ensure complete saturation to the military market through both internal and external channels.

Internal

- Create a DoD-wide Calendar of Events for Warrior Care for the month of November and make it available to DoD Components. The calendar will encompass all Service programs, events, initiatives, major speeches, military hospital events, and other events so that DoD Components can engage as appropriate at both the participation and support level.
- Ensure all Warrior Care related websites have the appropriate links to all Service Wounded Warrior programs, military hospital websites, and the National Resource Directory.
- Focus Pentagon Channel and AFN PSA messages on Warrior Care programs and initiatives for the duration of November.
- Highlight Warrior Care programs and initiatives through DoD's New Media programs including the Blogger's Roundtable, Podcasts, DoD Vclips, and ASY Live.
- Message Warrior Care Month through DoD Combatant Commands by making available online a media/tool kit which would include videos, graphics (posters and web tiles), widgets, and ideas on how bases can assist in this effort.

External

- Execute a DoD Tour Event that brings media with DoD leadership through the continuum of care of being a Wounded Warrior. The trip would include stops at medical training facilities (e.g., Camp Buehring), field hospitals (in Iraq or Afghanistan), Landstuhl (to see firsthand life saving technologies), and finish at Balboa or Brooke Army Medical Center. The comprehensive method of care provided by the military will be the focus for the trip. Media also may or may not be assigned "Wounded Warrior" identities for the duration of the trip and a Wounded Warrior may also lead the trip to reflect on his/her own journey.
- DoD Leadership attend Editorial Board meetings to discuss and inform media outlets (including print, broadcast, and radio at both the national and local levels) about the different Wounded Warrior programs, transition to the VA, and Guard/Reserve updates to reach a wider military audience.
- Pitch weekly and monthly newsmagazines on cover photo essays/feature articles focused around Warrior Care Month awareness efforts and Warrior Care programs. An example would be a photo essay entitled, "The Beauty of Courage," capturing the story of the courage of one Wounded Warrior and his/her family.

CONTINUUM OF CARE (continued)

Internal

- Assign each Service one day in November in which that Service will highlight their Wounded Warrior programs. Services shall include Reserve Components on their specified day. The DoD internal communications platform will support each Service Day through the Pentagon Channel (with a special feature "This Week in the Pentagon"), AFPS, new media, and other online tools as appropriate.
- A special Wounded Warrior Diary will be produced to show the entire process of care. The plot will follow one Wounded Warrior through the system again as he/she experienced it. This shall be distributed through the DoD Internal Command Information platform.
- Message Warrior Care into major speeches and ensure internal communications is engaged to reach back to military audience.

External

- Work with television talk shows and news magazine shows such as Oprah and Brian Williams, to bring attention to America's Wounded Warriors through the two different audiences reached during the day and evening.
- Assign each Service one day in November in which that Service will highlight their Wounded Warrior programs. Services shall include Reserve Components on their specified day. Services will invite media and constituent organizations to ensure transparency of program.
- Host day-long Summit about how the community assists DoD through the continuum of care.



CONCLUSION

OSD PA shall take the following steps to begin the implementation process for Warrior Care Month:

- Present Warrior Care Month to SECDEF and DEPSECDEF for consideration.
- Research survey questions and areas of focus.
- Form Warrior Care Month Steering Committee and assign executables.
- Host Warrior Care Summit (early September).
- Secure spokespersons and begin collecting Wounded Warrior Wishes.
- Lock-in Media Tour Events and mini-JCOC Events.
- Update Warrior Care Month calendar and ensure all parties have pieces in place NLT 15 October 2008.
- Determine long-term tactical strategy for Warrior Care based on the Senior Oversight Committee Line of Action 7 (Public Affairs/Legislative Affairs) Long-Term Communications Plan.